III. REMARKS

Claims 1-13 and 15-20 are pending in this application. By this amendment, claims 1, 2, 6, 9, 10 and 17 have been amended. Applicants do not acquiesce in the correctness of the rejections and reserve the right to present specific arguments regarding any rejected claims not specifically addressed. Further, Applicants reserve the right to pursue the full scope of the subject matter of the original claims in a subsequent patent application that claims priority to the instant application. Reconsideration in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Entry of this Amendment is proper under 37 C.F.R. 1.116(b) because the Amendment: (a) places the application in condition for allowance as discussed below; (b) does not raise any new issues requiring further search and/or consideration; and (c) places the application in better form for appeal. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request entry of this Amendment.

In the Office Action, claims 1-13 and 14-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Henson (U.S. Patent No. 6,167,383), hereafter "Henson" in view of Salvo (U.S. Patent No. 6,341,271), hereafter "Salvo." Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections, for the following reasons:

A. There is no Motivation or Suggestion to Combine the Henson and Salvo References.

With regard to independent claims 1, 9 and 17, Applicants assert that there is no motivation or suggestion to combine Henson and Salvo. Specifically, Applicants submit that Henson's failure to teach or suggest a component being unavailable at the manufacturer eliminates the motivation to combine Henson with the inventory management system and method of Salvo. In the Henson online store, an online shopper is warned upon selection of a

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system option if it will have a significant impact upon the delivery of the system being ordered. Col. 6, lines 48-51. However, nowhere does Henson teach or suggest that the impact upon the delivery of the system is due to a component being unavailable at the manufacturer. Instead, Henson uses such phrases as "...lead time warnings or shipment delays which would occur as a result of the selection of specific options," col. 6, lines 37-48, "...system option that has been identified as having a significant impact on the time to delivery of the system of interest," col. 6, lines 50-51, "...potentially problematic options," col. 6, line 57, "...items marked as significantly extending system delivery," col. 6, lines 66-67, "...particular chosen option and/or combination of options will result in a shipment delay," col. 7, lines 3-5, "...selected option or options will result in a shipment delay," col. 7, lines 8-9, "...an option having a long lead time," col. 15, lines 1-2, col. 15, lines 22-22, and "...an option on a long lead time," col. 15, line 16. Not one of the above Henson references specifically points out that an unavailability of a component at the manufacturer causes the mentioned problem, impact, long lead time or delay. The Office argues that "...there is no inference that component is not a factor in long lead time delivery." Page 2, paragraph 5. However, the absence of the inference that something, e.g., the unavailability of a component at the manufacturer, is not a factor does not, in and of itself, teach or suggest that it is a factor. The Office is inexplicably using a lack of disclosure (inference) of component unavailability to conclude that there is a disclosure thereof. As such, the Office's argument is completely illogical. A specific component may cause delay by, for example, being difficult to install or being problematic to configure when combined with another specific component. Thus, Henson does not teach a component being unavailable at the manufacturer. The present invention, in contrast, includes "...in response to a component being unavailable at the

manufacturer, querying at least one supplier system in real time that can supply the component to the manufacturer." Claim 1. As such, the querying, as included in the present invention, of the at least one supplier system occurs in response to a component being unavailable at the manufacturer. Even if, assuming *arguendo*, Salvo teaches the querying as argued by the Office, there is no motivation or suggestion to combine Salvo with Henson because Henson does not teach or suggest a component that is unavailable at the manufacturer, and there is therefore no need to query at least one supplier system in real time that can supply the component to the manufacturer. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Office withdraw its rejection.

B. The Combined References Fail to Teach or Suggest Each and Every Feature of the Claimed Invention

Applicants assert that the combined references cited by the Office fail to teach or suggest each and every feature of the claimed invention. For example, with respect to independent claim 1, Applicants respectfully submit that the combined references fail to teach or suggest "...offering the customer at least one order option in real time based on a result of the determination," and similarly claimed in claim 9 as "...program code configured to offer the customer at least one order option in real time based on a result of the determination," and in claim 17 as "...an options generator that offers the customer at least one option in real time based on a result of the determination." Specifically, the online store in Henson allows a customer to select options to build a customer configured machine. Col. 6, lines 19-21. However, these offered options are not the result of a determination by the system that is based on a received product order, but are simply part of a pre-defined initial options list. After the consumer has

chosen the desired options, Henson displays a warning icon if the shipment may be delayed and may allow a home consumer to modify the order as appropriate if the lead time is not acceptable. Col. 6, lines 44-46; col. 14, lines 58-61. However, Henson does not specify that the consumer is offered any options to help facilitate the modification. Furthermore, the Salvo inventory management system and method also does not provide the user with any options in response to a determination step that is based on the received order. In contrast, the present invention provides "...offering the customer at least one order option in real time based on a result of the determination." As such, the customer is offered at least one order option as opposed to simply being allowed to modify an order as in Henson. These options may include, for example, offering the customer an alternate component, removing a component from the order, selecting a manufacturing site, and ignoring the at least one option. In further contrast to Henson and Salvo, in which any options that are offered are done so prior to any determination having been made, the at least one offered order option as claimed in the present invention is based on the result of the determination. This determination determines component information of the at least one customer-selectable component included in the product of the received product order, including, *inter alia*, component availability in real-time. Neither Henson nor Salvo provide options based on this type of determination. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Office's rejection be withdrawn.

With further respect to independent claim 9, Applicants respectfully submit that the combined references fail to teach or suggest, "...to allow the customer to choose an available manufacturing site." As stated above, Henson allows a customer of its online store to build a custom machine by selecting from options listed on the configuration screen. Col. 6, lines 18-19.

Salvo allows a manufacturing site to monitor inventory status, automatically order inventory and purchase the inventory. Col. 3, lines 42-48. However, neither allows a customer to choose the site at which the manufacturing is to be performed. In contrast, the present invention includes "...to allow the customer to choose an available manufacturing site based on at least one site factor." Claim 9. As such, in the current invention, the customer is allowed to choose the manufacturing site based on at least one site factor. Neither Henson nor Salvo gives their customers this choice. Accordingly, Applicants request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Furthermore, with respect to independent claim 17, Applicants respectfully assert that the combined features of the cited art fail to teach or suggest a component information determinator that determines, in real-time, for a selected component option, any of the following: component availability, at least one of cost of an alternative component, component delivery lag time if the component is only available from a supplier and product delivery lag time and cost for different manufacturing sites. As stated above, Henson allows a customer to choose various options to build a machine. Col. 6, lines 18-19. The Henson online store application includes configuration, pricing, validation, shipment delay indication, and merchandising modules for the machine build by the customer. Col. 6, lines 31-34. However, as argued above, nowhere does Henson teach that its online store application determines component availability. Furthermore, Henson does not determine information about cost of an alternative component to the selected component option. Still further, the Henson system does not provide for component delivery lag time if the component is only available from a supplier since Henson does not determine whether a component is only available from a suppler. Finally, Henson does not determine, based on different manufacturing sites, what the product delivery lag time and cost will be. Salvo also

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provides none of these determinations. In contrast, the present invention includes "...a component information determinator that determines, in real-time, for a selected component option, component availability and at least one of cost of an alternative component, component delivery lag time if the component is only available from a supplier, and product delivery lag time and cost for different manufacturing sites." Claim 17. As such the component information determiner as claimed in the present invention determines information for a component option that has been selected by the customer. This information includes, *inter alia*, component availability and at least one of cost of an alternative component, component delivery lag time if the component is only available from a supplier, and product delivery lag time for different manufacturing sites. Henson teaches none of these determinations. Furthermore, Salvo does not remedy this deficiency because Salvo also provides none of these determinations. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Office withdraw its rejection.
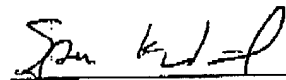
With regard to the Office's other arguments regarding dependent claims, Applicants herein incorporate the arguments presented above with respect to independent claims listed above. In addition, Applicants submit that all dependant claims are allowable based on their own distinct features. However, for brevity, Applicants will forego addressing each of these rejections individually, but reserve the right to do so should it become necessary. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Office withdraw its rejection.

IV. CONCLUSION

In light of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims are in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner require anything further to place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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